Nova Scotia 1752

Extract of a Letter from a Perſon of note in Nova Scotia, *communicated to the Publick by a Merchant, to ſupply the defects and errors of other accounts.*

WHEN the fleet from *England* arrived here laſt ſummer, it was reported that the *French* governor of *Canada* had poſted a detachment, conſiſting of an officer and ſixty regular troops, at St *John*'s river on the north ſide of the bay of *Fundy*, and in the heart of this province; This was more eaſily credited, as the ramparts of an old fort there, with a very little expence, might have been repaired into a defenſible fort. Upon a ſeeming confirmation of this report, Capt. *Rous*, in the *Albany* ſloop of war, was ſent thither to know the truth of it; and with orders, as is ſuppoſed, to diſpoſſeſs them: On his return we found that the *French* had attempted nothing near the mouth of the river; but that they were about to ſecure themſelves at ſome conſiderable diſtance from it, at a place the *French* governor claimed as a ſouthern boundary of *Canada* or *New France*. This being in a country inhabited by *Indians*, and the navigation of the river being unknown to moſt of the *Engliſh*, nothing farther could then be done.

In *September* or *October* following, Monſ. *le Corne* an experienced *French* officer, at the head of 70 regular troops, and a party of *Canada* irregulars, was ſent to take poſt at the iſthmus of *Chignecto*, being about 40 leagues eaſtward of that river, and of the extent of a line they claim, from lake *Champlain* to the weſtward on the back of *New England*, to the gulph of St *Lawrence*. To this place the *Indians* reſorted, to the number of 300; who fixing here their head quarters, made ſeveral incurſions upon the peninſula ſince; but have ſeldom done any miſchief.

As the *Nova Scotia French* in that part of the province are the moſt diſaffected of any, and have always behaved with contempt to the *Britiſh* government, tho' poſſeſſed of a very fine country, Governor *Cornwallis*, who had indulged them with a long term of deliberation in regard to the taking the oaths to his majeſty, to no purpoſe, ſent a ſtrong party, conſiſting of near 500 troops and rangers (to take poſſeſſion of *Chignecto*, and to break up the rendezvous of the *French* and *Indians*) commanded by Major *Lawrence* of *Warburton*'s regiment.

The *Albany* ſloop, and ſeveral ſloops and ſchooners, were ſent round to *Minas*, where the forces embarked on the 20th of *April*, and arriving ſafe, landed at *Chignecto* the 23d. On their approach to the town, which conſiſted of about 140 houſes and two churches, the *Indians*, probably induced by the *French* commandant, reduced the whole to aſhes in a few hours, and the inhabitants croſſing the river, threw themſelves under his protection, on what they call the *French* ſide of the line. The reaſon aſſigned for their burning the town is, that it ſtood on ground they pleaſed at preſent to call *Engliſh*.

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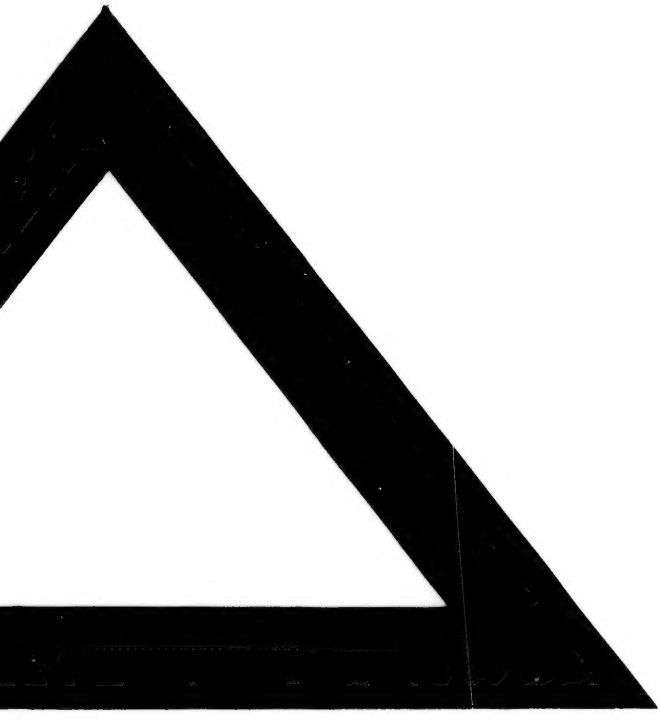
As many of the inhabitants had taken arms, making their united force conſiſt (as they ſay) of near 1500 armed men, the major ſent a flag of truce (they having hoiſted a *French* flag) to know the reaſon of their acting in this hoſtile manner, and afterwards had an interview with M. *le Corne*; upon which our forces reimbarked, and are ſafely returned to *Minas*.

What paſſed at this interview is not made publick, but it is probable the enemy were too well ſecured, and had too great a ſuperiority, to make an attempt practicable.

This line, which the *French* would now extend their claim to, will range eaſterly from *Crown point* nearly in the latitude of 44 deg. 30 minutes; which will not only cut off ſome millions of acres, the indiſputable property of the *New-England* colonies; but falling into a place called *Penobſcut Bay*, gives the *French* near three quarters of *Accadia*, or *Nova Scotia*, according to its ever known and acknowledged boundaries, and above 100 leagues of fine ſea coaſt, covered with innumerable iſlands, fine harbours and fiſhing banks, that will in time of war put it in their power to cut off the whole trade of the northern colonies, ruin the ſettlement we are making, and begger the whole continent; beſides furniſhing them with a fertile country covered with an inexhauſtible ſtock of trees and timber, for building and maſting their navy; and appears to me of much more conſequence to the nation, than the ſcorched neutral iſlands of *Tobago*, St *Lucia*, &c.

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